

**California Helmet Law for
Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards and Skates**

An act to amend Section 21212 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

Senate Bill 1924, O'Connell. Vehicles.

Existing law requires a person under 18 years of age to wear a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet while operating a bicycle or riding upon a bicycle as a passenger upon the streets or any other public bicycle path.

This bill would also require that persons under 18 years of age wear a helmet while operating a nonmotorized scooter or skateboard, while wearing in-line or roller skates, or while riding upon a nonmotorized scooter or skateboard as a passenger. Because this bill would expand the scope of an existing crime, it would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the state of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 21212 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

21212.

(a) A person under 18 years of age shall not operate a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard, nor shall they wear in-line or roller skates, nor ride upon a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard as a passenger, upon a street, bikeway, as defined in Section 890.4 of the Streets and Highways Code, or any other public bicycle path or trail unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet that meets the standards of either the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), or standards subsequently established by those entities. This requirement also applies to a person who rides upon a bicycle while in a restraining seat that is attached to the bicycle or in a trailer towed by the bicycle.

- (b) Any helmet sold or offered for sale for use by operators and passengers of bicycles, nonmotorized scooters, skateboards, or in-line or roller skates shall be conspicuously labeled in accordance with the standard described in subdivision (a) which shall constitute the manufacturer's certification that the helmet conforms to the applicable safety standards.
- (c) No person shall sell, or offer for sale, for use by an operator or passenger of a bicycle, nonmotorized scooter, skateboard, or in-line or roller skates any safety helmet which is not of a type meeting requirements established by this section.
- (d) Any charge under this subdivision shall be dismissed when the person charged alleges in court, under oath, that the charge against the person is the first charge against that person under this subdivision, unless it is otherwise established in court that the charge is not the first charge against the person.
- (e) Except as provided in subdivision (d), a violation of this section is an infraction punishable by a fine of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25). The parent or legal guardian having control or custody of an unemancipated minor whose conduct violates this section shall be jointly and severally liable with the minor for the amount of the fine imposed pursuant to this subdivision.
- (f) Notwithstanding Section 1463 of the Penal Code or any other provision of law, the fines collected for a violation of this section shall be allocated as follows:
 - (1) Seventy-two and one-half percent of the amount collected shall be deposited in a special account of the county health department, to be used for bicycle, nonmotorized scooter, skateboard, and in-line and roller skate safety education and for assisting low-income families in obtaining approved bicycle helmets for children under the age of 18 years, either on a loan or purchase basis. The county may contract for the implementation of this program, which, to the extent practicable, shall be operated in conjunction with the child passenger restraint program pursuant to Section 27360.
 - (2) Two and one-half percent of the amount collected shall be deposited in the county treasury to be used by the county to administer the program described in paragraph (1).
 - (3) If the violation occurred within a city, 25 percent of the amount collected shall be transferred to and deposited in the treasury of that city. If the violation occurred in an unincorporated area, this 25 percent shall be deposited and used pursuant to paragraph (1).

SECTION 2.

No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

Bill Number SB 1924

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